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Assisting Schools in Kabul



Eager students await instruction.

KABUL, Afghanistan - Embedded trainers from 201st Regional Corps Assistance Group have expanded their efforts in rebuilding Afghanistan by taking a serious interest in assisting local schools as part of their professional relationship with the Afghan National Army. At the invitation of Lt. Col. Lul Jan, the ANA 3rd Brigade, 201st Corps executive officer, representatives of the RCAG visited a girl's school in northwest Kabul that is located in the area where Jan lives. Maj. Fahir, the 3rd Brigade S-1, brought ETTs to the school his daughter attends, and Musfig, one of the interpreters, arranged for a visit to the village school he attended while growing up south of Kabul.

Many neighborhoods and villages make up the capital city of Kabul. Members of the 3rd Brigade ETT ended up "adopting" three area schools. After putting out an "all points bulletin" back home in the United States, they received generous amounts of school supplies and sporting equipment from businesses, churches, community groups, and schools.

Whenever an opportunity presented itself, school supplies and athletic equipment were delivered to the schools. The primary members of the support team included 1st Sgt. Howard Einwalter, Staff Sgt. Hoshang Naderi, Chief John Otten, Sgt. Maj. Chris Luther, 1st Lt. Matthew Macleod, Maj. Raphael Warren, and Maj. Frank Reid. All contributed to the process of delivering material and working with the schools. In addition to the donated items from home, the group was also able to provide a number of "handmade" desks, benches, and conference tables thanks to Sgt. Maj. Luther, who used his carpentry skills to build the needed furniture for the schools.

Members of the team took a special interest in a high school located in northwest Kabul. The school building was without any latrine facilities for a student population of about 6,000. Classes are conducted in three shifts that rotate throughout the day. Using Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds, a local

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The schoolmaster keeps a stern eye on his students while supplies are passed out.

minority contractor was hired to build an adequate latrine system for the school. Construction was completed while the school was closed for the winter. The site now has appropriate facilities, along with running water, which will greatly improve health conditions at the school.

Afghan children face many challenges on the road to acquiring a good education. The 3rd Brigade, 201st Corps embedded trainers chose to commit their additional efforts to improving schools since most were impressed by the eagerness of the children they met to attend school despite the physical shortcomings of their facilities and supplies. "I will be taking back numerous pictures of our adapted schools to my classroom at Fort Caroline Middle School in Jacksonville, Fla.,

where I teach 8th grade American History," said Maj. Frank Reid. "These will help remind us of the quality of our schools that we often take for granted in the United States."

Plans for the future include putting together a team of welders from Otten's ANA maintenance section to work with Luther, the local carpenter, in repairing desks at another of the adapted schools.

Story and Photos by U.S. Army Maj. Frank S. Reid, 201st Regional Corps Assistance Group

Bringing CLS Skills to the ANA

KABUL, Afghanistan - 5th Kandak, 1st Brigade, 201st Corps began life as the 35th Kandak at Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC) in March 2005. Upon graduation from basic combat training, the newly minted ANA soldiers reported to Pol-e-Charki (PeC) for individual training. 5th Kandak, which is the combat service support (CSS) battalion for 1st Brigade, conducted weapons training during the cold rainy days of March on the ranges at KMTC. Under the watchful eyes of the AIT instructors, the ANA soldiers worked on their advanced



From left to right, 1st Lts. Doost Mohammad and Mirza Mohammad, Maj. Sayed Salem, Lt. Col. Gary Tooley and Cpt. Khalil Ahmad review patient assessment procedures.

individual skills, including transportation, maintenance, communications and medical tasks. The unit then moved to Darulaman Garrison (Camp Julien) awaiting deployment orders for the upcoming elections and missions.

While at Darulaman, Lt. Col. Herman Hires, 5th Kandak ETT Team Chief, emphasized tuff training that not only challenged the individual skills of the ANA soldiers, but also developed their collective skills. This also provided a great opportunity for the 5th Kandak Medical Company embedded training team to instill a better understanding of medical knowledge and advanced lifesaving skills in their soldiers.

In July, the ETT grew with the addition of new members from the 53rd Separate Infantry Brigade of the Florida National Guard. Lt. Col. Gary Tooley, a physician assistant in emergency medicine, joined the team as the medical mentor for

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the ANA Brigade Surgeon. He quickly recognized that the majority of the 1st Brigade medics had not been to a medical AIT. Along with 1st Lt. Felix Gregorian, the Medical Company team chief, he expanded this need for medical training to a brigade-wide Combat Lifesaver course to help improve the medical knowledge of the medics and serve as a stopgap while awaiting their medical AIT.

The challenge was to work out a CLS course that fit both the capabilities and requirements of the ANA soldiers. After a few hours, on the back of an envelope, a list of the proposed course content was completed. Instructors were recruited from the U. S. ETTs, all of who were certified Combat Lifesavers. They included Sgt. Landen Koopman to teach casualty assessment, 1st Lt. Gregorian, who was fluent in Farsi, for the immediate treatments and airway management classes, Cpt. William Lindsey to cover control of hemorrhages and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Brown on shock treatment, Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Sage to teach wound management, Lt. Col. Tooley to conduct instruction in placement of IVs and environmental injuries, and Sgt. 1st Class Larry Bilton on fracture management and evacuation of the sick and wounded. Student skill stations were planned to follow each class. The last day was to include a mass casualty exercise played out on Darulaman Garrison.

In August, 2005, 71 medics and doctors from all Kandaks of 1st Brigade started the course. The ANA soldiers proved to be outstanding students, and actively participated with questions and answers. There were language barriers, to be sure, both English to Dari as well as English to Pashto, but everyone worked through the challenges with gratifying success.

The CLS course was the first of its kind in the ANA and was well received by the students and brigade staff. It paid dividends shortly after graduation, as medics from the 2nd Kandak rendered aid to several ANA soldiers who were wounded downrange during an engagement with anti-coalition forces. The ability to quickly and correctly insert IVs and bandage wounds played a significant part in saving the lives of these men.

Because of the success of the initial course, the ETT plans to conduct a refresher course in the future to insure that these newly learned skills are not lost.

Story and Photos by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Felix Gregorian, Medical Company Team Chief, 5/1/201



Afghan medical officers admire their work on casualty demonstrator Sgt. Landen Koopman (right).

Amir Abdur Rahman Khan

Abdur Rahman first distinguished himself as an imaginative and daring leader during the fighting that erupted between Shere Ali, son and nominated successor of Dost Mohammad Khan, and his two uncles in 1863. He was in his early 20s at the time. His father, Afzul Khan, had ruled over the northern provinces between the Hindu Kush and the river Oxus (Amu Darya) during the reign of Dost Mohammad, and after being passed over to succeed his brother, challenged the successor. During the years of strife that followed, Abdur Rahman occupied Kabul, freed his father and helped install him on the throne, and defeated Shere Ali in significant battles at Sheikhabad in 1866 and Kandahar in 1867. Towards the end of 1868, however, popular support for Shere Ali resulted in reversals that forced Abdur Rahman into exile at Samarkand, under Russian protection, for eleven years.

In 1879, with the death of Shere Ali and the occupation of Afghanistan by the British, Abdur Rahman returned to his homeland to claim the throne in the name of the Barakzai family. With encouragement from the Russian government, and the concurrence of the British, Abdur Rahman was officially recognized as Amir at a durbar convened on July 22, 1880. Although the British initially retained control of Kandahar and several adjacent districts, they agreed to provide arms and money to the new Amir, as well as protection against foreign

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Amir Abdur Rahman Khan

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Abdur Rahman's mausoleum in Kabul.

aggression against Afghanistan, in exchange for control over the country's external relations. In 1881, the British evacuated Afghanistan, and in a fierce fight at Kandahar that year, Abdur Rahman consolidated his control over the country by defeating his uncle, Ayub Khan, the great victor of the Battle of Maiwand.

Over the next 20 years, the Amir ruled Afghanistan with an iron fist, ruthlessly suppressing insurrections and resistance to his rule. In 1887, he put down a revolt by the powerful Ghilzai tribe, and several years later pacified the northern provinces, severely punishing anyone associated with the rebellion. The Hazara tribe lost their independence after fierce fighting in 1892.

During his reign, Abdur Rahman was able to impose an organized government upon the people of his country through a strong army and widespread system of espionage. Although he turned to Europe for modern armaments, he fiercely resisted the introduction of any other western influence, to include railroads and telegraphs. He displayed remarkable diplomatic skill in dealing with Russia and Great Britain, although the legacy of accepting the infamous Durand Line as the country's demarcation of the boundary with India (later Pakistan) remains a volatile issue with the people of

Afghanistan. Habibullah, Abdur Rahman's oldest son and successor, had one of his father's former palaces in Zarnegar Park, near Pashtunistan Square, converted into a mausoleum to serve as his final resting place.

Story and Photo by U.S. Army Lt. Col. Gregory Moore, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix PAO

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